

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-22 are pending in this application.

Claims 5-8, 13, 14, 18, 23, 24, 48, and 52 are objected to, but are indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Accordingly, appropriate ones of these Claims are so rewritten in independent form as the Examiner suggests. Thus, the indicated Claims are respectfully submitted to be ready for allowance.

Claim 49 is indicated to be allowable.

Original Claims 27, 32, and 39 are canceled.

Original Claims 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31, 33, 36, 38, 40, 48, and 52 are presently amended.

Objection to the Drawings

The drawings are objected to because the Office Action asserts that the larger sized portion and the smaller sized portion of the insert recess are not seen in the drawing Figures. Respectfully, these features are seen in Figure 20, and are described in the text at page 18, last paragraph, continuing on page 19, through line 25.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 16 stands rejected under the above-identified statutory section because the Office Action asserts that the "having no openings" language is confusing. Accordingly, this Claim is amended in view of the Examiner's comments, and it is believed that the amended Claim is now very clear. Rather than reiterate here each of the amendments made to Claim 16, the Examiner is respectfully asked to peruse this claim, and to consider its structure and claimed subject matter as a whole. The Applicants believe that amended Claim 16 does now properly particularly point out and distinctly claim subject matter which the Applicants believe to be their invention.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 9, 15-17, 19-22, 25-27, and 31, and 32 stand rejected under the above-identified statutory section as being fully anticipated by the Roesch '897 patent. With respect to Claims 1-4, 9, and 19-22, this rejection is respectfully traversed in view of the following reasons.

The other Claims listed in this rejection are either amended or depend from an amended claim, so that the amended claims improve the clarity of the subject matter which the Applicant seeks to patent. The distinctions of these amended claims is further spoken to below.

With respect to Claim 1, it is seen that this claim recites a junction box in which the side walls are stated to be non-perforate. The non-perforate side walls of the present inventive junction box afford a user of the junction box with great utility because one or more holes may be drilled in the box at locations selected by the user in order to install one or more conduit sockets. Thus, the conduit sockets may be installed in a great variety of locations, and the junction box still affords greater than conventional interior volume for the location of wiring and components.

In comparison to the subject matter recited by Claim 1, it is seen that the utility box taught by Roesch '897 has side walls that at one end define perforations 18 with wire-engaging barbs 96 (best seen in Figures 5 and 6). Clearly, the Roesch '897 patent does not teach a junction box with non-perforate side walls. Thus, the rejection of Claim 1 as anticipated by the Roesch '897 patent is effectively traversed.

Further, at the opposite end of the utility box of Roesch '897, there is formed a knockout 50, so that the location of a conduit socket installed at this end of the utility box is pre-determined. The wall with knockout 50 is not a non-perforate wall once the knockout is snapped out of place, as is seen in Figure 4.

Claims 2-4, and 9 depend from Claim 1 and are submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the independent claim from which they depend.

Independent Claim 15 is amended by this response. Amended Claim 15 recites a junction box having non-perforate side walls. Thus, the remarks above concerning independent Claim 1 are equally applicable to amended Claim 15.

Claims 19-22 depend from amended Claim 15, and are submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the independent claim from which they depend.

Independent Claim 25 is amended by this response. Amended Claim 25 recites a method of providing a plastic junction box with conduit sockets that may be located substantially anywhere a user chooses. The junction box is stated to be provided with non-perforate side walls. Thus, the comments above concerning Claim 1 are equally applicable to amended Claim 25.

Claim 26 is also amended, and recites a junction box having an insert recess with an outer larger portion opening outwardly on the box, and in inner smaller portion opening inwardly of the box to a volume defined therein. The insert recess is stated to be for receiving an insert member defining a conduit socket. The Office Action cites the Roesch '897 patent at Figure 1, and refers to the knockout 50. However, when the knockout 50 is removed from the wall of the Roesch '897 patent, a hole results in that side wall of the junction box. There is no insert recess in the patent of Roesch '897 which anticipates the features of the insert recess defined in amended Claim 26. Thus, amended Claim 26 is also respectfully submitted to present novel subject matter over the applied Roesch '897 patent.

Claim 27 is canceled by this response.

Independent Claim 31 is amended and recites the features and details of the insert recess defined by at least one side wall of a junction box according to the present invention. These features are not anticipated by the Roesch '897 patent. Accordingly, amended Claim 31 is also submitted to present novel subject matter over the applied reference.

Claim 32 is canceled

Claims 33-35 depend from amended independent Claim 31, and are submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the independent Claim from which they depend.

Claims 36-39, and 42-45 stand rejected under the above-identified statutory section as fully anticipated by the 'Robinson '499 document. The Robinson '499 document is believed to disclose a two-part coupling structure of ball-and-socket configuration for joining a conduit to a junction box at various angles. A very significant deficiency of the Robinson '499 teaching is the tenuous nature of the securement of the ball-and-socket portions of the coupling structure to one another. That is, the coupling portions taught by Robinson '499 could easily come apart, so that electrical wiring would be exposed between the disconnected portions of the coupling structure.

In contrast, amended Claim 36 recites a unitary coupling structure, which is of a single piece, and in which the axis of the body portion and the axis of the stepped through bore of the body and boss portions are aligned. This alignment is guaranteed and is certain because the claim as amended states that the body portion is of axially extending cylindrical shape. The stepped through bore is also stated to be axial. Accordingly, the stepped through bore which defines the conduit socket is not of variable angulation as is the case with the coupling structure of Robinson '499. And, more importantly, the coupling structure recited by amended Claim 36 cannot come apart into two disconnected parts (as can the Robinson '499 coupling) because the present inventive coupling is unitary. Thus, amended Claim 36 is also respectfully submitted to present novel subject matter over the Robinson '499 document.

Claims 37 and 38 depend from amended Claim 36, and are submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the claim from which they depend.

Claim 39 is canceled.

Claims 40 and 41 also stand rejected under the above-identified statutory section as fully anticipated by the Wentworth '581 patent. Claim 40 is amended, and recites an insert member for forming a ganged pair of junction boxes each having a respective rectangular insert recess. The insert member is recited to provide a rectangular passage extending between the ganged junction boxes. Figure 29 of the present application illustrates the great utility such a insert member provides because the rectangular passage is so much more spacious than convention couplings, and wires can be passed between the ganged junction boxes much faster and with less effort.

The Wentworth '581 patent is seen to teach a conventional connecting nipple having a relatively small circular through passage. This coupling structure is secured into a knockout hole of each of the ganged junction boxes by use of a nut on a threaded portion of the nipple. The nipple of Wentworth '581 does not and cannot provide the large, spacious rectangular passage between the ganged junction boxes, as is recited by amended Claim 40. Accordingly, amended Claim 40 is respectfully submitted to present novel subject matter over the applied Wentworth '581 patent.

Claim 41 depends from amended Claim 40 and is submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the independent claim from which it depends.

Claims 46, 47, 50, and 51 stand rejected under the above-identified statutory section in view of the Mauri '566 document. This rejection is respectfully traversed in view of the following reasons. The Mauri '566 document is stated by the Office Action to have a recess floor 12 bounded by a pair of recess walls 14 (i.e., the Office Action paraphrases the claim language). However, it is seen in the text of the Mauri '566 document that item 12 is a screw hole. Further, the walls 14 may bracket or be arrayed adjacent to the screw hole 12, but they certainly do not "bound" this screw hole. The screw hole 12 is defined in and by a vertical rib or boss 11. This structure is clear and certain from the illustrations and text of the Mauri '566 document. Thus, there is not recess floor in the Mauri '566 patent as is asserted by the Office Action. The Office Action refers to a screw (not illustrated in the drawing Figures of Mauri '566) and asserts that this screw is the "locating member" of the subject claims. The subject claims recite that the locating member extends from a floor of a recess. The screw of Mauri '566 could not possibly extend from a recess because any screw inserted into the screw hole 12 would be not in a recess but extending above the opening of the junction box seen in Mauri '566. There simply is no floor of a recess in the Mauri '566 document. The feature 12 is a hole, and the back wall (or base) of the junction box of Mauri '566 does not have any equivalent locating member extending from it.

Moreover, the subject matter of Claims 46 and 47 has to do with a "mounting member" (recited particularly in Claim 47) and in Claims 50 and 51 it has to do with "mounting" of the junction box. Further, comparing the subject matter of Claims 46, 47, 50 and 51 as illustrated in Figures 8-11 of the present application to the structure illustrated and described in the Mauri '566 document, there simply is no mounting structure in Mauri '566 that is comparable to or anticipates the illustrated, described, and claimed subject matter of the present application. In fact, Mauri '566 appears to provide for mounting of the junction box as is seen in Figure 7 using slide out tabs which define screw holes. The projecting end portions of these tabs (with the tab not slid out) are seen in Figures 2A, and 2B of Mauri '599.

Thus, Claims 46, 47, 50, and 51 are also respectfully submitted to present novel subject matter over the applied Mauri '566 patent.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 10-12, 20-22, 28-30, and 33-35 stand rejected under the above-identified statutory section as obvious over the Roesch '897 patent applied alone. With respect to Claims 10-12, this rejection is respectfully traversed. With respect to the other claims listed in this rejection, the independent claim of the family is amended by this response, or if the listed claim is dependent, it is amended, so that the rejection is avoided, as is further explained below.

Claims 10-12 depend via Claim 9 from Claim 1. Claim 1 recites a junction box having non-perforate side walls. The side walls of Roesch '897 include one side wall that is not only perforate, there is a permanent opening in this side wall where a perforation 18 is provided for insertion of a cable to be gripped by a barb 96. The insertion of a cable in perforation 18 does not close this perforation. And, there is no way for a conduit to be connected to the junction box at perforation 18. Thus, the junction box of Roesch '897 is always and forever open to the elements. Roesch '897 does not teach or suggest a junction box that has non-perforate walls, and is thus closed to the elements except where a user chooses to drill the box and install a conduit socket member (it being understood that the main or large opening of junction boxes is closed by a cover plate). Claim 10 is submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the independent claim from which it depends.

Claims 11 and 12 depend from Claim 10 (and from Claim 1) and are submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the claims from which they depend.

Claims 20-22 depend via Claim 19 from amended independent Claim 15. The allowability of Claim 15 is addressed above. Claims 20-22 are submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the independent claim from which they depend.

Claims 28-30 depend from amended independent Claim 26. The allowability of Claim 26 is addressed above. Claims 28-30 are accordingly submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the independent claim from which they depend.

Finally, Claims 33-35 depend from amended independent Claim 31. The allowability of Claim 31 is addressed above. Claims 33-35 are accordingly submitted to be allowable on the same basis as the independent claim from which they depend.

In view of this amendment, both reconsideration and allowance of the Claims pending in this application are respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number set out below if such will further or expedite prosecution of this application.

Patent
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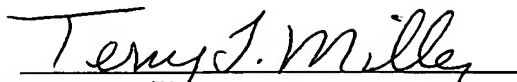
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Respectfully submitted,

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By

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Terry L. Miller", written over a horizontal line.

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